

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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TAGS: ETRD, EWWT, BEXP, XX, MA

SUBJECT: INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL EXPORT
POLICY: MADAGASCAR

REF: STATE 095673

1. THREE PRIMARY FACTORS CONSTRAIN US EXPORT GROWTH IN
MADAGASCAR (A) TRADITIONAL TRADING TIES WITH FRANCE;
(B) INABILITY OF MOST AMERICAN COMPANIES TO DEAL WITH
PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS IN FRENCH LANGUAGE; (A) LACK OF
DIRECT SHIPPING SERVICE FROM US TO MADAGASCAR.

2. FACTOR A IS THE RESULT OF HISTORY. FACTOR C IS PARTLY
THE RESULT OF FACTOR A, AND ALSO THE RESULT OF THE PROBLEM
ITSELF - THAT IS - MADAGASCAR BUYS VERY FEW AMERICAN
EXPORTS AND THUS IT DOES NOT PAY AMERICAN SHIPPING LINES
(OR ANY SHIPPING LINES FOR THAT MATTER) TO OFFER DIRECT
SERVICE TO MADAGASCAR FROM THE U.S. SITUATION IS AGGRAVATED BY
MADAGASCAR'S NOTORIOUSLY INEFFICIENT PORTS WHICH DIS-
COURAGE MOST SHIPPING LINES FROM SERVING MADAGASCAR.

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3. HOWEVER, BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE THAT US GOVERNMENT
MIGHT BE ABLE TO ALTER FACTOR B, THE INABILITY (OR
UNWILLINGNESS) OF MOST AMERICAN FIRMS TO DEAL WITH
PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE. CERTAIN-
LY THIS PROBLEM MUST HAVE BROADER APPLICABILITY
THAN JUST IN MADAGASCAR. SUGGEST THAT TASK FORCE
MAY WANT TO CONSIDER SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES TO

REMEDY INABILITY OF US FIRMS TO DEAL IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE WITH THE WORLD FRANCOPHONE MARKET, PARTICULARLY IN EUROPE AND AFRICA. POSSIBILITIES COULD INCLUDE GOVERNMENT OPERATED OR SUBSIDIZED CONSULTANCY/TRANSLATION SERVICES, PERHAPS RESTRICTED TO COMPANIES WITH GROSS EXPORTS BELOW A CERTAIN FIGURE AND FOR ONLY A CERTAIN LIMITED NUMBER OF YEARS, TO ENABLE THE NEW EXPORTER TO ESTABLISH ITS FRENCH LANGUAGE CAPABILITY. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IN RECRUITING OR TRAINING FRENCH LANGUAGE QUALIFIED PERSONNEL FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED POTENTIAL EXPORTERS. SMITH

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